

May 1993



River Currents

Serving The Guardians Of The Western Rivers

Volume 14 Issue 3

Floods Return



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River Currents

DISTRICT COMMANDER

RADM Norman T. Saunders

CHIEF OF STAFF

CAPT James J. Lantry

PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICER

LT Christopher P. Otto

ASST PAO

PAC Larry Lawrence

EDITOR

PA2 W. Scott Epperson

STAFF

PA2 Robert Raskiewicz

PA3 Frank Dunn

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On The Cover

MSTC Michael Byran (left) and DC3 Matthew Crane assist a young river resident. The rising Mississippi River in St. Charles County, Mo. left two young mothers and their children stranded until rescued by the St. Louis Coast Guard



E\$says For 1000

The U.S. Naval Institute in Annapolis, Md. will award cash prizes of \$1000, \$750 and \$500 to the authors of the three winning essays in its annual Coast Guard Essay Contest.

This contest was created to encourage discussion on current issues and new directions for the Coast Guard.

Entries will be 3000 words or less, must be original works and must be received by June 1 at the Naval Institute.

Winning essays will be published in the Naval Institute's "Proceedings" magazine along with other selected entries.

Winners will be announced around Sept. 1. For further information call Jenifer Paytas at (410) 268-6110.

Obtaining Your Goal

Are you between age 21 and 32, and have completed enough undergraduate work to earn a Baccalaureate Degree in 24 months? Are you considering becoming an officer once you finish your degree?

Then maybe you should consider the Pre-Commissioning Program For Enlisted Personnel.

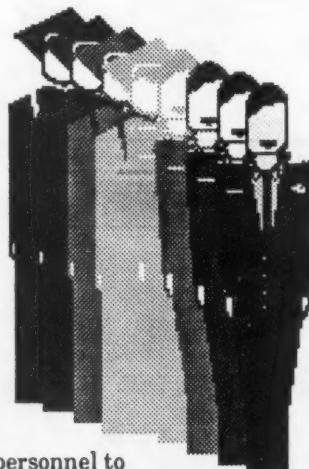
The PPEP enables selected enlisted personnel to attend college on a full time basis for up to two years with a goal of qualifying to attend OCS.

The program provides an upwardly mobile mechanism for qualified enlisted personnel to attain a commission.

PPEP students receive full pay and allowances during their studies and are also eligible for advancement.

Although the number of selectees are determined at the time of selection, the program attempts to keep a total of 10 members in school at any given time.

For further information contact your Educational Services Officer.



When Flood Waters Rise

Story By PA3 Frank Dunn
Photos by PA2 Rob Raskiewicz

After even years of drought conditions, spring flooding returned to the Second District.

On April 15, MSO St Louis responded to a request for flood relief assistance from the St. Charles County, Mo. Emergency Operations Center.

A Disaster Response Unit and a Coast Guard Liaison Officer from the MSO were immediately dispatched to St. Charles and after meeting with members of the EOC it was determined assistance was necessary.

"It seems that local emergency agencies received a 911 call and could not respond to the location due to the flood waters," said LTJG Tim Deal, Operations Center Supervisor for Commander of Coast Guard Forces.

The DRU and an entourage of local media left the EOC and headed for the riverside town of Portage De Sioux which was already feeling the effect of the rising Mississippi River flood waters.

The DRU's remained on standby in the Portage De Sioux area ready to assist residents.

On April 16 a call for help was received by the St. Charles County EOC and passed to the DRU on scene. Two women wanted to be removed from their home with their two infants to a safer area. The DRU moved quickly to an area as close to the house as they could get and launched two small boats.



Members of MSO St. Louis respond to a call for help and transport four flood victims to higher and dryer ground.

Shortly thereafter the boats returned with the two women and their children.

"They were not in any immediate danger but they had requested assistance and there was a concern for the children," said CWO Jon P. Burk On Scene Coordinator for MSO St. Louis's DRU One.

Over flights by a Coast Guard HH-65 Helicopter from Air Station Chicago were also conducted during the flood operation. These over flights provided the Commander of Coast Guard Forces as well as members of the EOC with much needed information on the entire flooding situation that was not attainable on the ground.

Shifts were taken by DRU's from Base St. Louis and active duty and reserve personnel from MSO St. Louis. Some DRU's from the District Staff took advantage of the situation and conducted training.

Second District Readiness had scheduled a flood relief exercise around this same time, but due to actual flood operations and the potential for more flooding it was canceled.

As of April 30, river levels were gradually falling throughout the District.

This was the first time the Commander Coast Guard Forces structure was put into effect. This places all Coast Guard assets in the area under one command, in this case MSO St. Louis.



Portage De Sioux, Mo. was among the areas in St. Charles County most affected by the floodwater. While most of the residents along that stretch of river abandoned their homes for dryer ground, several hardy souls decided to stick it out.

Adapting OPA 90 To The Inland Rivers

by CAPT Thomas Rodino

The Oil Pollution Act of 1990 (OPA) is not wholly the result of the 1989 Exxon Valdez oil spill in Alaska. Legislation aimed at improving the nation's ability to respond to major pollution incidents and to expanding the scope of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (FWPCA) had been under consideration for several years. The Exxon Valdez incident, however, provided the impetus to enact the legislation.

The effect of OPA/FWPCA amendments is to greatly expand the role of federal, state, and local agencies in preplanning for major pollution incidents throughout the country. The statute and its implementing federal regulations also impose significant preparedness requirements on the owners and operators of vessels and facilities which transport or handle oil and certain other cargoes. Included are requirements for developing spill response plans and for ensuring that containment and cleanup resources are readily available.

The primary focus of OPA is navigable waters. For us that means the Inland River System. On the surface, having to deal only with rivers and limited numbers and types of spill sources would seem to a straightforward task. Rather than simplifying the planning and response efforts, however, the rivers make them more complex. The Second District spans portions of six federal regions (III through VIII). Also, major rivers—the sites of most inland spills covered by OPA—often form the boundaries between the regions and states. The result is that all planning and response operations are multi-jurisdictional affairs potentially involving dozens of federal and state agencies from as many as three separate regions.

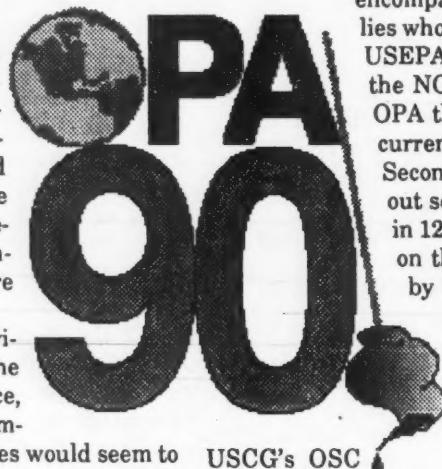
The Coast Guard is the lead federal agency for carrying out the OPA mandates in the Coastal Zone. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) is the lead federal agency for the Inland Zone. The dividing line between "coastal" and "inland" has been determined by agreements between the two agencies. Those agencies are responsible for providing federal On Scene Coordinators (OSCs) in their respective areas of responsibility. The OSCs are charged by the National Contingency Plan (NCP) to coordinate the

overall responses to major pollution incidents and by OPA to coordinate preplanning for those responses. Generally, the USCG assigns the OSC responsibilities to the Captains of the Port (COTPs), while USEPA assigns them to individuals hired specifically to serve as OSCs. The COTPs' OSC authorities generally extend to the same areas of responsibility as for other Coast Guard missions. This is where the Second Coast Guard District differs from the coastal districts and why we need a whole different approach to OPA here.

The Second Coast Guard District, comprising all or part of 22 states in the center of the country and encompassing the Inland River System, lies wholly within the Inland Zone. The USEPA is the agency predesignated by the NCP to administer the NCP and OPA throughout the District. Under current agreements with USEPA, the Second District COTPs have carried out some of the OSC responsibilities in 12 specified port and harbor areas on the rivers. The areas identified by the agreements are considered

part of the Coastal Zone for the USCG, but they account for only 12% of the Inland River System and less than 2% of the Second District area. The role is further limited to cases involving oil spills associated with vessel operations. As a result, the USCG's coastal approach to OPA, wherein the COTP exercises oversight for most of the COTP zone, cannot be applied where the COTP's area of responsibility is only a very small portion of the zone.

The differences between Second District COTP/OSC roles and the need to effectively coordinate between adjoining federal regions caused us to look for a simpler approach to oversight responsibilities for the OPA mandates. Because we do lie wholly within the Inland Zone and USEPA is responsible for the vast majority of the District's area of responsibility, we proposed to Coast Guard Headquarters that we follow the USEPA lead for implementing OPA in the Second District. We also proposed that we simplify the OSC picture by eliminating the specified port and harbors agreements. The effect would be that the entire District would be classified as Inland Zone, USEPA would be the predesignated OSC agency throughout, and the USCG



USCG's OSC

would fashion new agreements with USEPA to carry all NCP and OPA requirements in a more cohesive and coordinated manner. Headquarters approved both proposals and we are now in the process of working out the details with the six USEPA Regional Offices. The first major step in implementing this approach will be the establishment of the Area Committees to carry out the planning required by OPA.

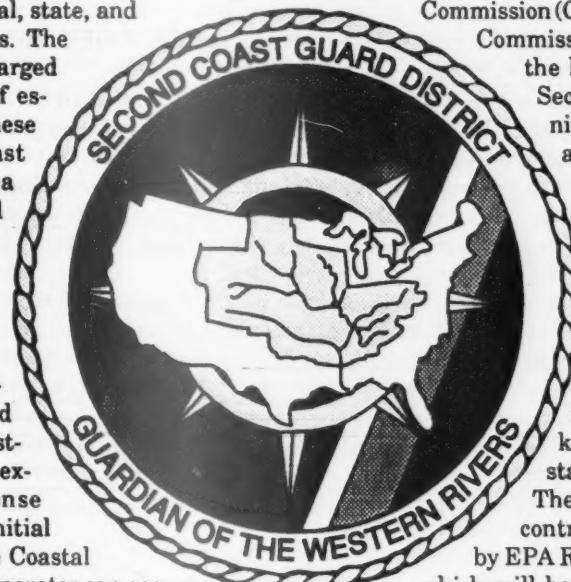
AREA COMMITTEES

A major requirement of OPA is the establishment of Area Committees to conduct spill response planning in local port areas. The intent was that each identifiable port area where a significant risk of pollution exists should be the focus of intense, coordinated response planning by federal, state, and local government agencies. The predesignated OSC is charged with the responsibility of establishing and chairing these Committees. The Coast Guard approach to Area Committees is predicated on the fact that in the coastal areas, the COTP is the OSC and the principle port/risk areas are easily definable. The USEPA, however is initially equating Inland Zone-Areas with the existing federal regions; the existing Regional Response Teams (RRTs) are the initial Area Committees. In the Coastal Zone, a vessel or facility operator can easily determine the identify of and the local requirements established by the local Area Committee. This is not true on the rivers. If we used the separate USCG and USEPA OSC/Area Committee approaches in the Second District, vessels operating on the rivers would have to contend with the planning requirements of 12 small areas under USCG jurisdiction, with each pair separated by an area under the jurisdiction of at least two USEPA areas (one on each side of the river). A vessel traveling from Baton Rouge to Pittsburgh, for example, would pass through eight USCG areas in five COTP zones and five USEPA Areas/Regions on the Lower Mississippi and Ohio Rivers. It was not difficult to recognize that this situation would be unmanageable for anyone in the Inland Zone, government or industry.

Recognizing our customers' needs — we have to make it possible for industry to comply with the mandates of OPA — we looked for a more practical and more

effective approach to inland river Area Committees. In concert with USEPA Region V and existing Basin Commissions, we have been working to develop and refine an approach that treats each major river basin as a single area for planning purposes. USEPA V has been the lead agency for development and proposal of the approach, and we, through our participation in the Regional Response Teams for the six federal regions, have focused on promoting acceptance of the approach throughout the Inland Zone.

In essence, the USEPA Region V proposal is to establish multi-Regional Area Committees along basin lines utilizing existing Basin Commissions starting with the Upper Mississippi River Basin Association (UMRBA), the Ohio River Valley Water Sanitation Commission (ORSANCO), and the Great Lakes Commission (GLC) — the jurisdiction of the latter does not extend into the Second District, but the initial planning work is a cooperative effort among the three. This basin approach simplifies the entire Area Committee data-gathering and planning process on the Inland River System and also provides the ideal mechanism for inter-area and inter-regional coordination, since the Basin Commissions include representatives from the key federal agencies and the states from both sides of the river. The Basin Commissions will act as contractors, through grants offered by EPA Region V, to develop information which will be used to develop Area Contingency Plans (ACPs). An OSC will be assigned to chair each of the Area Committees. USCG COTPs will be members of the Area Committees that extend into their zones, and will be charged to assist and support USEPA in developing the ACPs. This approach combines a wide range of existing planning activities by federal and state agencies, and will help to prevent duplication of effort, ensure consistency in planning, and facilitate coordination with the individual vessel and facility response plans which are also required under the implementing regulations. Implementation of this approach is just beginning and much work remains, especially for river areas where there is no existing basin commission. Overall, however, we see this approach as being beneficial to both the response community and our customers. It will simplify the preparedness and response processes, and both standardize and improve the effectiveness of spill response planning on the Inland River System.



Adapting OPA 90 Continued**PREPOSITIONED EQUIPMENT**

OPA provided funds for the purchase of pollution response equipment to be part of the national strategic resource inventory. Nineteen sites around the country, including one in the Second District—St. Louis—were designated for pre-staging major equipment (boom, skimmers, etc.). Locating some of that equipment in St. Louis provides both immediate access to the equipment for response operations within the District and also a centrally-located strategic point from which the equipment can be transshipped to other parts of the country.

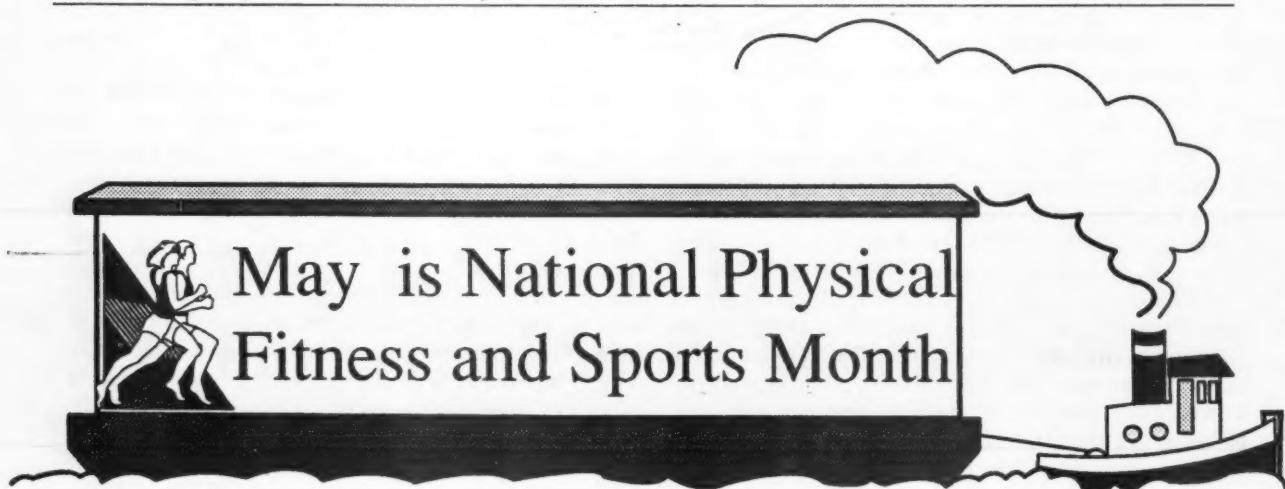
In addition to the national strategic inventory, funds were provided to each District to purchase "first aid" pollution response equipment for each of the MSOs. The Second District used some of the money to assemble 34 complete response packages, each consisting of trailers outfitted with 1,000 feet of river boom along with the equipment needed to deploy it (anchors, connectors, tools, etc.). The remainder of the money was used to develop a communications support package for use by OSCs in the field. Due to the geography of the District, communications has long been a problem, especially during response operations in remote areas outside normal landline and cellular telephone and radio coverage zones. The equipment includes both a satellite telephone terminal and cellular telephones with voice, facsimile, and data transmission capabilities, portable facsimile machines, VHF radio base station and transceivers, and the ancillary and support equipment needed to make it all work using electrical power supplied from either 12-volt or 110-volt sources. This equipment, which can easily be transported by any air or highway, can be delivered anywhere in the

District within 24 hours to provide the OSC with direct communications to all parties involved in a response operation.

THE SECOND DISTRICT IS DIFFERENT

The nature of the Coast Guard's spill preparedness and response missions in the Second District is different than in the Coastal Zone. The geography alone—6,500 miles of rivers, many of them the boundary lines for six federal regions and 22 states—dictates that we can't do business like our counterparts on the coasts. Staffing is another factor—our six MSOs and five MSDs have a total personnel allowance of 165 persons, including all of the administrative staff for the two Regional Examination Centers and the Vessel Documentation Office. Spill response operations are different—any oil spilled is immediately moving downstream at up to 8 MPH, and the riverbanks are lined with water intakes and sensitive environmental resources; response often means not trying to contain spilled oil but rather trying to direct it to midstream to ensure it is dispersed by the river flow. We are in the Inland Zone where the USEPA is the predesignated federal OSC agency. However, the Second Coast Guard District is the only common denominator in both planning and response activities under OPA/FWPCA and the NCP throughout the six federal regions covering the Inland Rivers.

The uniqueness of the Second District and our role on the Inland Rivers demands both innovation and the highest standards of leadership. We have met both of these challenges and look forward to the many others associated with implementing the OPA mandates on the Inland Rivers.



The Goal: Drug Free Kids

By PA2 W.Scott Epperson

According to a recent survey, the American public believes that drugs are the most serious problem facing the nation today, and American teenagers themselves, overwhelmingly regard drug abuse as the biggest problem facing people their age.

To help combat this nationwide problem Coast Guard, Navy and Marine Corps Reserves have joined together to create "Campaign Drug Free", a volunteer effort aimed at reaching young people throughout the country.

Members of Reserve Unit MSO Memphis have stepped into the mainstream of the campaign. Since the beginning of "Campaign Drug Free" in 1991, they have taught 37 classes and a total of 1037 students. The message is: Drugs and substance abuse are harmful and a hindrance to personal growth and achievement.

Memphis Reserve Unit participants are LTJG Charles T. Scheel, YNC David A. Schuster, BM1 Robert W. Cox and SK2 Charles L. Landry.

According to Cox, the presentations are not given in large groups or auditoriums but in the classrooms, one class at a time, where the students can feel more comfortable and interact with the instructor better.

First the students are presented with information on how drugs interfere with success and what harm

drugs can cause a person. Then they are involved in role-playing scenarios where they come face to face with situations that they might encounter in life.

"We teach the kids that if you stay drug free you will be a happy healthy individual." Cox said.

After the classes students are asked to write down their reactions to the presentations.

"I learned a lot about drugs and the way people hide them, like in their clothes and bodies. Many of these people are caught, but many are not, so you have to be careful not to run into any one who might ask you to take or carry drugs. You have to be extra careful these days."

— 5th Grader

"I think Chief Shuster's lesson was very interesting to listen to. I learned a lot because I didn't know that they could know who and where someone was bringing drugs or other bad stuff." — 5th Grader

"It taught me a lot. I learned about drugs and what to do if a person asks you to try them. I found out what could happen to you if you take drugs." — 5th Grader

"The students enjoyed being a part of the presentations. They paid attention and learned a great deal." — 5th Grade Teacher

"The Coast Guard has made a difference in how I look at drugs." — 5th Grader

"A good positive role model." — 5th Grade Teacher

Good positive role models are what Campaign Drug Free promotes. By helping local schools and communities counter the threat of drugs to our children, Coast Guard Reserve units like Reserve Unit MSO Memphis are making a difference.



BMI Robert Cox talks to students in their classroom at a Memphis school during one of his Campaign Drug Free presentations.

The Run From

Photos from video of race taken by members of Team River Tenders.



Charlene Lantry, wife of D2 Chief of staff CAPT Jim Lantry, approaching an exchange point. By the end of the day she ran a total of 10.15 miles.



River To River

By PA2 W. Scott Epperson

Among the 216 8-runner teams that participated in this year's 80-mile River-To-River Relay Race across Southern Illinois were three teams from Coast Guard units in the Second District.

The Coast Guard River Tenders #1, from District and MSO St. Louis, the Coast Guard Group Lower River Rats, and a team simply known as U.S. Coast Guard

Base St. Louis joined more than 1700 hardy individuals on April 17, to take on this grueling route through the hilly countryside between the Mississippi and Ohio rivers.

Starting at McGee Hill on the Mississippi and ending 80 miles away in the City of Golconda, Ill. on the Ohio, the course was divided into 24 sections. Each section was approximately 3.3 miles long and each runner finished

three legs by the end of the day.

"The hardest leg of the race was the first one," said LCDR Bob Acker the District's Safety and Occupational Health Specialist. "The anxiety built for weeks in advance. Getting the first leg under your belt got rid of the butterflies."

According to Acker, half of the fun of the relay was the team effort and the scenery, and with the number of teams present, camaraderie between different team members on each leg grew.

"You got to know other runners and carried on conversations while you ran," Acker said.

"It wasn't your typical running event."

The River Tenders finished the race in nine hours and 15 minutes, (8 minutes 45 seconds faster than 1992) with an average team pace of 7 minutes 15 seconds per mile.



LCDR Arn Denny of District Legal Staff passes the baton to Charlene Lantry at one of the 22 exchanges on the 80 mile course.



LCDR Bob Acker strides through the last leg of the race before entering Golconda Ill.

River Currents May 1993



D2 Industry Day

The Second District's Marine Safety Division held their annual Industry Day in St. Louis on March 18.

Industry Day provides an opportunity for the open exchange of information on issues of mutual concern to the inland marine community and the Coast Guard.

The event addressed such items as :

- Management and the use of waterways
- Bridge issues
- Environmental regulatory enforcement
- Licensing and manning
- Drug and alcohol testing

- OSHA/Coast Guard jurisdiction
- Law enforcement boardings in St. Louis
- OPA 90 issues

The Coast Guard also presented public service awards to several civilians for acts of heroism and supporting the missions of the Coast Guard.

New this year was entertainment during lunch. Veteran riverboat pilot "Wamp" Poe, Captain of the General Jackson was the guest speaker. Captain John Hartford of country music fame and river lore performed several popular songs in a manner that suited the occasion.

Casino Belle Severs Power Line During Bridge Transit



The 241-foot-long Dubuque Casino Belle moored in Wood River, Ill. waiting to be inspected by officers from Marine Safety Office St. Louis. The riverboat experienced a difficult journey due to high water from Dubuque, Iowa to Bay St. Louis, Miss. The ship snapped a temporary power line while passing through the Hannibal Railroad Swing Bridge causing the bridge to be stuck in the open position with no power. This prompted a marine safety inspection of the vessel. No one was injured on the 2000-capacity-passenger vessel and it only suffered a broken radar scanner and some severed radio antennas. (Photo by PA3 Frank Dunn.)

COAST GUARD HONORS TWO FOR HEROIC ACTIONS

Story and photos By PA2 Rob Raskiewicz

The U.S. Coast Guard honored two Army Corps of Engineers employees, April 20, in Pittsburgh for their heroic actions while saving the lives of two people seconds before their houseboat was swept over a 15-foot-high dam on the upper Monongahela River in Greensboro, Penn.

Rear Admiral Norman T. Saunders, Commander of the Second Coast Guard District presented Armand Spooner and Jerry Jenko with the Coast Guard's Silver Lifesaving Medal during a ceremony witnessed by their family, friends and coworkers.

On the afternoon of May 3, 1992,



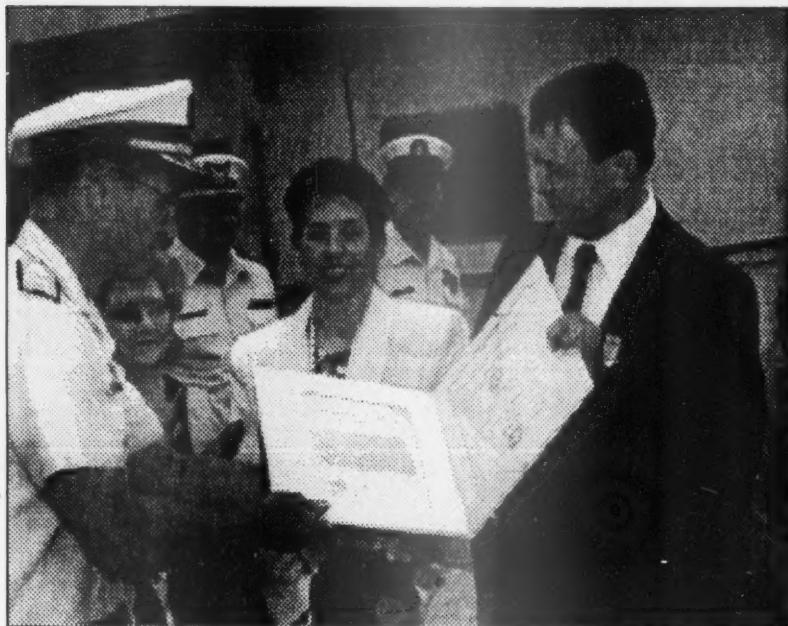
RADM Saunders congratulates Jerry Jenko after receiving the Silver Lifesaving Medal. The lifesaving medals are awarded for acts of heroism in saving others on the water.

Spooner and Jenko, employees of the Greensboro Lock and Dam put their lives on the line to assist two men who were trapped on a dis-

abled houseboat that was caught on the submerged dam's crest.

Spooner and Jenko maneuvered a small boat close and passed a line in an attempt to pull the houseboat to safety, but the houseboat's cleat gave way. The two then brought the small boat along side and pulled the stranded people off the houseboat. Seconds later, the houseboat went over the dam and was destroyed in the turbulent waters below.

The Gold and Silver Lifesaving medals are the highest U.S. awards the Coast Guard bestows on citizens. Since established by the Secretary of Treasury in 1847, approximately 650 Gold Lifesaving Medals and 2,000 Silver Lifesaving Medals have been awarded.



Armand Spooner admires the award citation presented by RADM Saunders. The issuing of a lifesaving medal for heroic actions along the inland waterways is a rare and celebrated event.



Master Chief Ronald Reed, the Second District's Command Enlisted Advisor, talks to Wyaconda crew members at their homeport in Dubuque, Iowa (shown from left are SN Greg White, FN Douglas Weathers and SN Ryan Patrick).

While talking to the crew, the CEA stressed the importance of communicating their views to their elected representatives. Also, CHAMPUS supplemental insurance and leadership issues were discussed.

Reed was one of several members of the district staff who accompanied the District Commander on an inspection and familiarization tour of D2 units. (Photo by PA2 Rob Raskiewicz)

Public Affairs Office
Second Coast Guard District
1222 Spruce St.
St. Louis Mo.63103

